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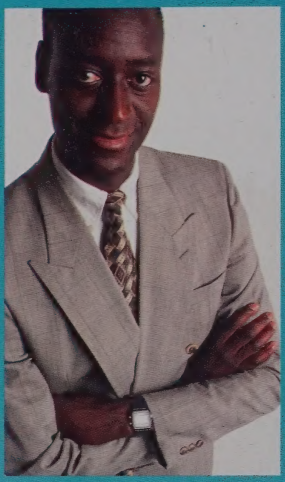

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MISSISSIPPI Star

VOL. 3 NO. 5 JANUARY 1999

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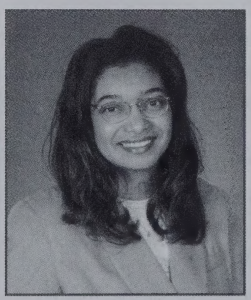
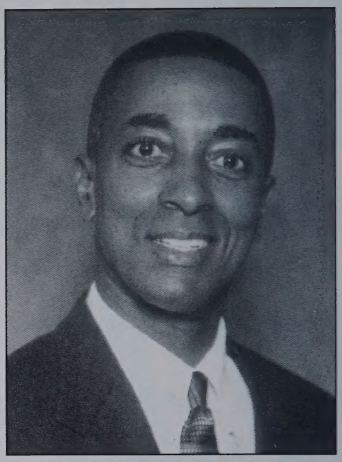


Dr. Donna Jones Expects a Great 1999

# PUBLISHER'S PAGE



*Maurice Singleton*

Tonight I'm going to party like it's 1999! That line caught my attention the first time I heard the song by The Artist Formerly Known as Prince some ten or twelve years ago. "Why 1999?" "Why not 2000?" "The year 2000 should be a bigger reason for a party," I thought to myself. But the song was so upbeat and so full of energy, the questions I had about the two years became unimportant. I, like just about everybody else enjoyed the song for the energy and style of the artist and just about forgot about what I didn't understand about the lyric.

When I first heard the song, 1999 seemed so distant, so far into the future. But as they say, time flies when you're having fun. Well, I guess I've been having fun because I don't know how the time passed so quickly.

The year The Artist sang about is here! I'm sure that more people heard his hit song as the clock struck midnight on New Year's Eve this year than any other song. In fact, they played it twice, back-to-back at midnight at the party where Vonretta and I were. About thirty of us couldn't get enough of it on the first play, so we all did an extended quicker-paced electric slide to bring in the new year.

I expect 1999 to be a good year for my community, church and family. In Hancock County, we have new companies getting ready to start production; and there are some existing companies that plan to increase their number of employees. The fair chairpersons at our church appear to be off to a good start with their fund-raising. And our family has been fortunate to have received many blessings as 1998 came to a close which will impact us positively in 1999.

I still have a question with the song: Did The Artist mean the whole year 1999 or did he mean one night - New Year's Eve. And, did he mean party like partying with music and a lot of people getting together all the time, or did he mean enjoy your life and enjoy whatever it is you like doing? I think he meant

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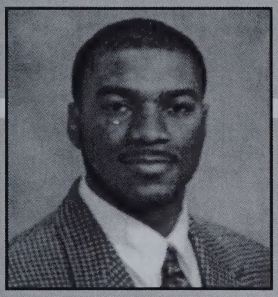

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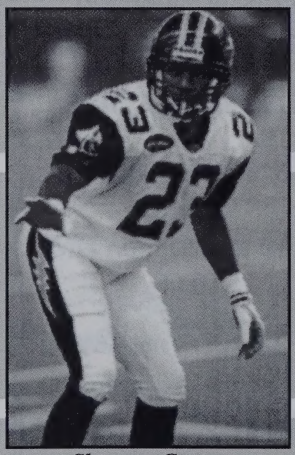

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the latter.

1999 is going to be a good year. It's going to be a busy one, but I expect it will be a good year. I'm going to attempt to apply the energy of the hit song by The Artist to my work, my community involvements and my interactions with family and friends.

I have taken on quite a bit over the next twelve months. I know that the way to accomplish my 1999 goals is to work on them daily. Some days I won't feel like doing what needs to be done, but I will have to force myself to do what I need to do. To be honest, in order for me to achieve my 1999 goals, I will have to work as hard as the The Artist suggests we party in 1999. That may be the clue. If I can treat my work like fun, I will enjoy it more; and I will be more inclined to do it because it is fun.

This year I'm going to work like it's 19...99! Well it doesn't have the same lyrical rhythm as the hit lyric by The Artist, but it works for me. If I can take that attitude over the next twelve months, I'll be in a great mood for a party on December 31, 19...99.

***Have a Happy and Prosperous 1999!***

MISSISSIPPI Star

**Tell us the name of an African-American person in history from whom you draw the most inspiration. And please tell us what it is you most admire about this individual's example.**

**Entries should be fifty words or less, and should be mailed to the following address:**

**Mississippi Star Opinion Poll**
P.O. Box 2651
Bay St. Louis, MS 39521

***Entries should be received by February 10, 1999***

*Star Magazine, Inc. reserves the right to accept or reject the printing of entries.*

★

## Letters to the Publisher

should be 100 words or less.

**Star Calendar:** Events of interest to South Mississippians should be submitted on your organization's letterhead, specifying the date, time, place of event and a number of contact. Submissions should be received by the twentieth day of the preceding month.
Be sure to include a daytime telephone number.

Mail submissions to

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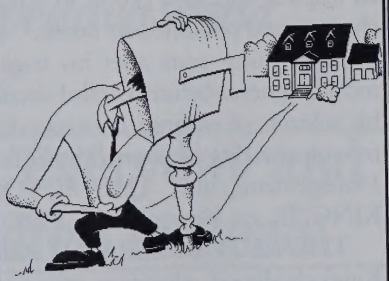

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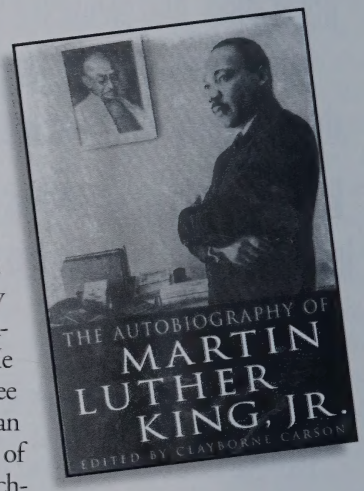
## BOOK REVIEW

# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

*Edited by Clayborne Carson*
*Warner Books Hardcover*



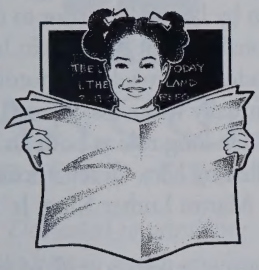

After spending the day at a motel in Memphis, Tennessee fine-tuning the details of an upcoming march, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a tireless leader in America's civil rights movement, stepped out on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel on Mulberry Street on the chilly evening of April 4, 1968. Shortly thereafter, the "drum major for justice" was dramatically cut down by an assassin's bullet. He was 39. During his twelve years and three months as a civil rights leader and a human rights activist, Dr. King traveled hundreds of thousands of miles, delivered hundreds of speeches, inspired countless people to action, brought about historic national and social changes, and published six books.

Now, thirty years after his tragic murder, a first-person account of his life, including never-before-revealed details of his personal story, has been gleaned from his volumes of writings, correspondence and interviews. In commemoration of a monumental life cut short, Warner Books in partnership with Intellectual Properties Management, Inc., **THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.** on November 16, 1998 (Hardcover: $25.00).

**THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.** covers King's childhood, education, ministry and rise to prominence as a civil rights activist as well as his life as a husband and a father of four. The book also offers King's seldom disclosed views on some of the world's greatest and most controversial figures: John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Lyndon B. Johnson, Mahatma Gandhi, and Richard Nixon. It paints a rich and moving portrait of a people, a time, and a nation in the face of a powerful change.

In the wake of King's death, there have been thousands of journalistic writings, hundreds of scholarly articles, scores of doctoral dissertations, tens of masters theses and several book-length biographies written, but none approach the literary achievement of Clayborne Carson's construction of **THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.** No other author can claim Carson's unique perspective, his impressive position on his close proximity to – and unparalleled knowl-

# READING...



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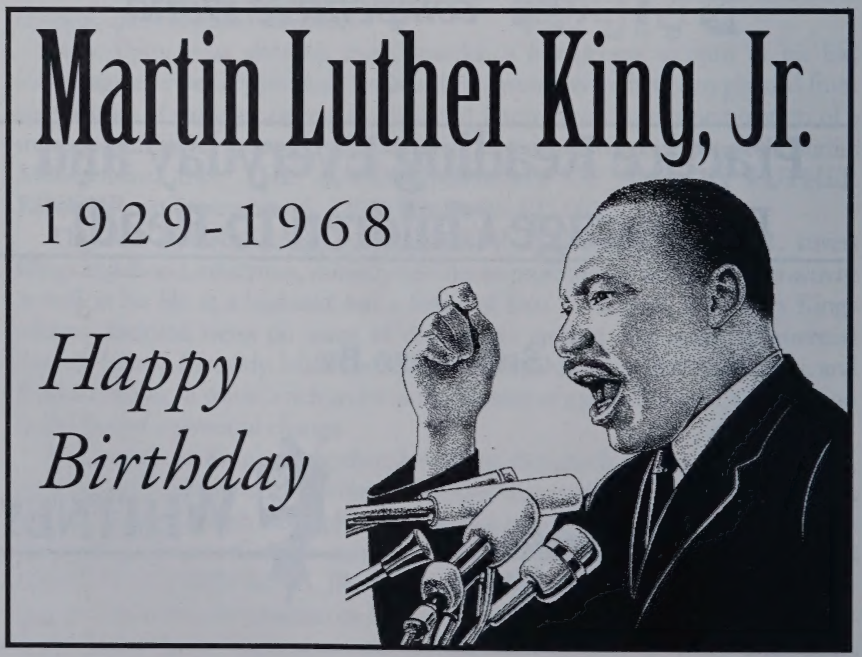
edge of – King's published and private papers. Before Carson grew into the Stanford professor, stellar author and acknowledged specialist on the civil rights movement that he now is, he was one of many participants in the march on Washington where he heard the famous "I Have a Dream" speech given by Dr. King. Prior to this, he was present as an elected delegate at the 1963 national student meeting in Indiana where he met Stokley Carmichael, leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee – and an activist on whom Carson eventually wrote his doctoral thesis. These events are among the beginnings of Carson's life-long role as both an academic and an activist. A role that led to his being called by Mrs. Coretta Scott King to serve as the director of and senior editor for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project.

As the director of the King Papers Project, Carson guides a staff of student researchers in the important task of combing through King's vast legacy of writings – as well as an impressive library of recordings and video footage. After thirteen years as the head of this tremendous archive, Carson can claim a knowledge of King that few scholars contest. It is a knowledge that qualifies him to weave King's life-time of writings into a literary whole that does justice to the great leader's life and legacy.

Clayborne Carson holds a Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles and was chosen by Mrs. Coretta Scott King to direct the long-term project of editing and publishing the papers of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. He is the author and/or editor of several books on the civil rights struggle in the United States, including A KNOCK AT MIDNIGHT (Warner Hardcover, $20.00).



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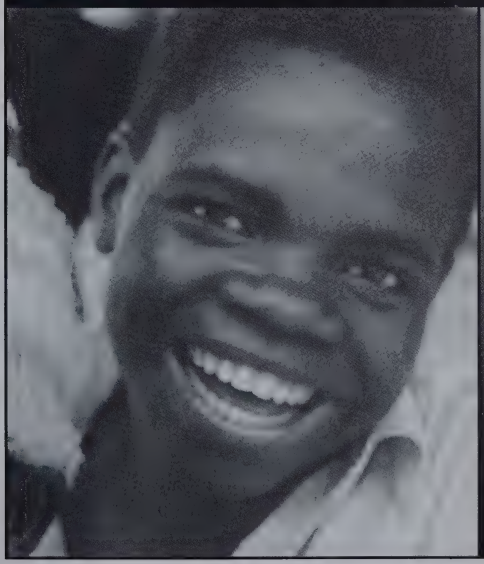

## Don't Get Wasted On Drugs.

# Fiftieth Anniversary Marks A New Beginning

*by Bruce Northridge*

Fifty years ago, on December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The anniversary is a reason to celebrate; it's sort of a 4th of July celebration for human rights activists. And when you think about it – it should be an occasion that everyone celebrates. A conference at Jackson State University on the weekend, Dec 11-13, was an opportunity for human rights activists to meet, to network, to share the stories of their struggles ... and to agree that a new beginning was in order.

*Dennis Dahmer, son of slain civil rights leader Vernon Dahmer, Sr., accepts award on behalf of the Dahmer family.*

What new beginning? The attendees represented a wide variety of struggles. Some are outlined below; but note that it is quite difficult, in just a short article, to describe all of the issues that these individuals are tackling, and certainly difficult to capture the magnitude of any one of these challenges. The good news is – whether their fight is <u>against</u> poverty, hunger, child abuse, police brutality, the abuse of prison inmates, or the death penalty ... or whether their fight is <u>for</u> children's rights, women's rights, workers' rights, welfare rights, environmental justice, or civil rights – we are no longer small in number, fighting our individual fights. With this new vision, our new strategy finds that we are many in number, strong and united, fighting a unified fight for HUMAN RIGHTS.

- We listened to Amnesty International representatives describe their fight against the death penalty – their argument regarding the inhumanity of the practice in the first place, and especially the issues involving cases where reasonable doubt persists and specifically the issue of juveniles on death row.

- We were touched by the plea from a woman who has single-handedly organized an effort, largely through the use of the Internet, to review the case of Lacresha Murray, an 11-year-old girl who is in jail, charged in the death of the 2-year-old she was supposedly babysitting, charged with capital murder and found guilty of negligent homicide, and sentenced to 25 years – "with no evi-

dence, witnesses, opportunity, motive, nor history of aggression". Read about the case [www.peopleoftheheart.org], and you'll see why we need to question our criminal "justice" system. This story of a District Attorney eager to prove how he was "tough on crime" right before an election is out-and-out scary.

- Closer to home is the New Orleans case of Shareef Cousin. There is a videotape that shows Shareef in a championship basketball game at the time of the murder he's been convicted of committing. How and why District Attorney Harry Connick would fight the defense attorneys' attempts to bring this tape into evidence just boggles the mind of any fair-minded human being. Read more at the following website [www.ncadp.org] or in the New Orleans newspapers [a re-trial begins in January], and consider standing up for justice in our criminal justice system!

- The arguments made by the people from the Kensington Welfare Rights Union were also quite convincing. Do you agree with the U.N.'s Declaration of Human Rights that everyone has the right to food ... and that a country as rich as ours should be able to provide a safety net for the poorest of our citizens? In the recent push for Welfare Reform, has the pendulum swung too far? When Governor Fordice boasts of the numbers of people that have been removed from the welfare rolls in Mississippi, who is concerned with where those individuals end up? ... or what's happening with their children?

There was discussion during the Conference that the leaders of the various human rights organizations represented might consider, as a strategy, identifying **poverty** as the prime target. Activists working to combat hunger and homelessness in America are certainly aware that poverty is the root cause for their issues. Less obvious are the connections to problems such as domestic violence, child abuse, school dropouts and illiteracy, crime and the criminal justice system, and finally, the death penalty. It was hypothesized that each of these would be less of a problem if there was less poverty. The importance of the Kwaanza principles, Ujima and Ujamaa, was emphasized. That is, through our Collective Work and through Cooperative Economics, we realize that we are all responsible for each other ... we are our brother's keeper!

Why JSU? Actually, the first Southern Human Rights Organizers Conference had been held two years earlier at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. The irony of holding a human rights conference at an institution that had long denied the civil rights of people of color was not lost on the organizers. However historic it was, the organizers sought a location for this second conference that might be more welcoming. They chose Jackson, Mississippi, the home of the civil rights organizer, Medgar Evers. We could certainly feel that we were standing on tall shoulders as we remembered those who had gone before us in the struggle for peace and justice. And in our struggles, we begin anew —united under the banner of HUMAN RIGHTS, and bolstered by a U.N. document that was agreed to by the family of nations ... one that has been as important to the rest of the world as the Bill of Rights has been to Americans. The admonition of Pope Paul VI – "If you want Peace, work for Justice" – is as true today as it has ever been.

## SOMETHING TO PRAY ABOUT...

# *The Best Resolutions ... Are Covenants*

*by Stacy James Mackey*

Every year about this time, many of us decide to make resolutions. We make promises to ourselves to spend less, lose weight, give up a bad habit, tell our families we love them more often, become more organized as well as other aspirations of becoming a better person THIS year than we were last year. Resolutions are often our feeble attempts at making commitments.

Each year I have vowed to eat healthier. Now that I've given birth to two children my reflection in the mirror made me want to call Richard Simmons to get his new Move, Groove and Lose Program to start off the new year. Like most resolutions, they don't last. We have the best intentions at the start, but a few months into the year many of us forget what our resolutions even were. Lucky for us, God doesn't forget His promises.

One of my son's favorite stories is the biblical classic, Noah's Ark. Faithful Noah built an enormous boat and gathered two of every creature to ride safely in that vessel until God had completed flooding the earth. To insure Noah that all life would never be destroyed by floods again, God's Word says, "I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off anymore by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy earth."

Scripture goes on to reveal how we and Noah can be certain that God's promise will never be broken or forgotten: "I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of my covenant between me and the earth." Genesis 9:11, 9:13 and 9:15. "And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you..."

The next time you make a promise or resolution, don't let it get lost in the clouds right after you make it. Make a covenant commitment that what you said you will do. YOU WILL DO. Just let the rainbow above your eyes be your reminder. The following is taken from a verse in my son's book: "And this is God's promise to you and to me, written by rainbow and twig of a tree, a promise to lead us and guide us always, to love and protect us the rest of our days."*

Make a covenant resolution this year. Make YOUR word something on which you and others can rely.

I hope I have given you something to pray about.

**Verse taken from The Ark That Noah Built by Melody Carlson.*

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# WILMA PETERS

Starting a part-time business came very natural to Wilma Peters. In addition to working in a full-time capacity as a payroll clerk, she worked evenings during the first four months of the year as a tax preparer for H&R Block, the national income tax preparation company .

Peters enjoyed the work, and eventually came to the realization that she could provide the same service as an independent tax preparer. She began operating as an independent tax preparer during the 1992 tax season. She started with only a few clients that included individuals as well as small business owners. Some clients held full-time jobs and operated small businesses after regular working hours, just like Peters.

"I enjoy doing tax preparations," said Peters. " After working for H&R Block, I realized that there were many potential clients out there and that I could do it myself. I enjoy the work. It's a good challenge, and I enjoy a good challenge."

Part of the challenge for Peters was the issue of time management. However, she quickly developed a good grasp of that part of the business.

"I can usually do a client's tax reports in a two-day turnaround," explained Peters. "On average I can do three or four tax returns in an evening during tax season."

For the past twenty-two years, Peters has been employed at WLOX-TV 13 in Biloxi. During the past three years, she has been a personnel coordinator. She said that when she leaves the television station at the end of the day her work is finished for that day.

"My job is from 8:30 a..m. to 5:00 p.m.," she explained. "I don't have to worry about my job after 5:00 pm. So, it's not very difficult for me to change gears and start my other work when I get home."

Her client list includes relatives, friends and co-workers as well as beauticians, barbers, salespeople, plasters, mechanics, carpenters, contractors and other types of small businesses. She started with ten clients in 1992, primarily doing their personal preparations. Since then the business has grown substantially. She now does quarterly reports and annualized statements for ten businesses as well as numerous individual tax preparations.

"I'm still working on my vision," Peters explained. "I'm not necessarily where I want to be, but I'm working on it. You have to have a goal and a determined mind. You work toward that goal. I have learned that God is the person that I need to be in contact with. He is first in my life. You can achieve anything you want with determination and by believing and trusting in God."

*Wilma Peters enrolled in night classes to complete a bachelor of science degree in business administration with emphasis in accounting from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1988.*

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# Expecting a

*by Maurice E. Singleton, Jr.*

**Dr. Donna Jones** is expecting a great 1999 for the students and teachers at Waveland Elementary School in Hancock County. As the students and teachers meet their goals, so will the parents and Dr. Jones.

In her second year as the principal it appears that Dr. Jones has adjusted quite well to the school and the coast. Having moved to Mississippi from Louisiana to earn her doctorate degree at the University of Southern Mississippi, she has developed an appreciation for Mississippi, and at least for the time being, the coast appears to be home.

*In her second year at Waveland Elementary*

"I really love the cohesiveness of the community, of it being small and everyone caring for each other," Dr. Jones said. "The Mississippi Coast is very diverse. You have many rich cultures here. There is a strong Louisiana flair here. I felt at home right away."

It is quite apparent that Dr. Jones feels at home, not only from a geographic point of view, but from a professional standpoint as well. Waveland Elementary, at least for the time being, is home for the career of Dr. Jones.

Waveland Elementary provides Dr. Jones with challenges and opportunities. The scores on standardized tests are not where they could be, however, Dr. Jones feels that with a year at the school behind her, and the teachers and parents understanding the mission, better test scores and other positives will follow.

"I have an opportunity now with the students who come here at five years of age to work with them, to set a foundation in so far as their academics, their social behavior and also an awareness of everybody's different," she explained. "Diversity. Right now in the school, I have a cultural awareness through the arts program where we individually look at each particular culture. And at this

# Great 1999!!!

*Dr. Jones "inspecting what she's expecting"*

time we are teaching children that everybody's different. And that's okay. And we are giving them a reason why in so far as their geographic location in the world, and their language, their customs and their traditions. And we are teaching that that's okay. And that's wonderful"

"And I think that also with any child, the best time to teach them is now when they are young so that they will not have an opportunity to experience some of the prejudice that they may experience in their community, whether it is at home or whether it's with friends or relatives. If we can use this (the school) as an avenue to teach them that everybody is different, and to respect everybody's differences, then I believe that we have done our jobs as educators."

Dr. Jones affirmed that the role of parents in the learning process is critical. She encourages teachers, counselors and all people involved in the students' lives to listen to parents.

"When we listen to the parents we can better know how to reach the children, and also to fulfill their educational needs, and also to work with them better and to better prepare them socially for the world in a demographic society."

The futures of the students at

Waveland Elementary are very clearly and closely tied to Dr. Jones' personal, professional and spiritual goals. There are no walls between them. One is part of the others.

"My desire is to have the greatest student achievement here at this particular level for children to learn as much as they can now so that they can have a solid foundation." She also feels strongly about equipping students with the basics - reading, writing and arithmetic.

"That's basically what I want," she added. "I want us to be solid in that at this school. I want it to be simple. Teach them the math. Teach them to read. Teach them to write. I want to make it as simplistic as I possibly can for the teachers to do for the students, because it is a simple process. It's not a complex process. I also want to go back to some of the old fashion ways of how we did things, how we expected children to learn, how we expected them to do their best. In other words, communicate to them a higher level of expectation."

A higher level of expectation is what drives Dr. Jones: a higher level of expectation for the school, each individual, her church and community. A higher level of expectation motivated her through a personal situation that challenged her grit, her will and her spiritual wholeness.

Before Dr. Jones began work on her doctorate in Hattiesburg, she was forced to deal with the disappointment of not being promoted to a position for which she had given so much energy through studying, hard work and prayer. It was a position for which she strongly believed she was the best qualified.

"I knew that was where I wanted to be. I had an excellent interview," she explained. "I was really disappointed."

Dr. Jones looks back at that disappointing experience as a pivotal point in her personal growth. She rose above the disappointment; and she made herself better in the process.

"If I would have let that keep me down, or if I would have stayed there, I wouldn't have been in a position to get my doctorate. I would not have come to the coast," explained Dr. Jones. " I would have stayed there in that city; I would have kept looking back."

"When something negative happens in our lives, we are not to get bogged down," added Dr. Jones. "We are to look at another avenue and another way to achieve what we need to achieve in order to be successful, in order to make a positive contribution to our community, to our church, our family. If I would have gotten bogged down with that, I would never have been able to listen to what God was saying to me."

"I am very fulfilled. I love this job," explained Dr. Jones.

"God is my compass. God leads and guides me to where I need to be. All things work together for good to those who love the Lord and who are called according to his purpose."

# ALDA BRYANT

## *Living, Loving & Succeeding with Addiction*

*by Maurice E. Singleton, Jr.*

Alda Bryant is a busy lady. The mother of two and grandmother of one works as a receptionist from eight to five, Monday through Friday. When she leaves this job she hurries home to change into her uniform to work as an auxiliary policewoman at Pass Christian Public Schools athletic events.

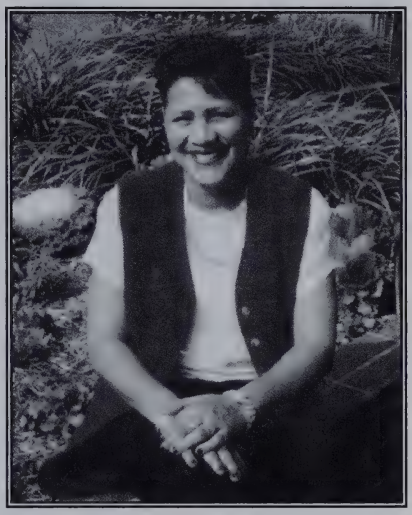
After the football games or basketball games, she runs home to prepare dinner for her children. It's a busy schedule, but Alda would not have it any other way. She enjoys being busy as well as she enjoys the way she's handling her responsibilities as mother and grandmother.

Alda has come a long way: "A blessed long way," according to Alda. "Only through the grace of God have I made it this far."

Just over seven years ago, Alda's life was completely different. She was totally bankrupt: "spiritually, mentally and physically." Alda was addicted to cocaine.

Alda said that she didn't know who she was or where she should have been. She got caught up with people who were doing things and were involved in things that were so far removed from the values in which she was raised.

"I found some friends who I thought were friends," she explained.



*Alda enjoying seven years of sobriety*

"I thought they were friends. Standing on the outside looking in, it all looked good: the glamorous life, the cars, the jewelry and the clothes. They looked like they had it all."

Alda slipped into a life in which she had never imagined herself. She "hustled," and did a lot of things, some illegal. But there were things she "could not do."

"Because of my upbringing and because of my family, there were some things that I could not do," she explained. "I was addicted but I had a conscience."

She had been introduced to cocaine in 1979. But she did not become a regular user until the late1980s. A two and a half year stint in the United

States Army served to separate the young lady from the evils of the street. However, the lure of the drug and its glamour found Alda in 1986. She "played" around with cocaine initially, but before long, the drug had control of her.

For nearly six years, Alda's life was a nightmare. Looking back at that time, this is how she describes those years: "My worst day in sobriety is about one hundred times better than my best day when I was on drugs."

Her days on drugs came to an end in 1992 when she was somewhat shocked into reality. A man had been ripped off by a woman whose physical appearance resembled Alda. The man was out for revenge. The word on the streets was that this man's intention was to inflict bodily harm on Alda. The threat of this man served as a wakeup call for Alda.

"At that point, I said enough is enough," said Alda. "I was sick and tired of being sick and tired."

Alda, with the support of a true friend, signed into a drug rehabilitation program at the Mississippi State Hospital at Whitfield on January 7, 1992. The thirty-one day program was "excellent" according to Alda. It started her on the road to recovery. That program was followed up with a three-month secondary program for women in downtown Jackson.

Alda has not used cocaine since before she began the program at Whitfield in 1992.

"It was an excellent program," she explained. "It was where I found my peace. They taught you how to find a higher power, something greater than yourself. Because of how I was raised, my higher power was God."

She said that she had to learn how to trust and respect herself and not worry about what other people thought of her. "I had to be positive," she explained. "Negative thoughts would make me resort back to the pitty-pot stage where I would start feeling sorry for myself." The pitty-pot stage was the vulnerable Alda. She fought successfully to avoid that state of mind and heart.

Alda credits "rigorous honesty" for her success with battling addiction. "I had to be honest to myself," she said. "It didn't matter what others thought. When I became honest with myself, and admitted to myself that I was an addict, and my life was unmanageable, and that God could and would if he was sought, deliver me from my addiction."

A counselor, a loving family and a grandmother who would not give up on her granddaughter were compliments to Alda's recovery.

"People don't want to listen to peo-

# *Life's choices are simple when taken one step at a time.*

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*The world is full of changes. Some that make our lives better, some that only tempt us into believing they will. And so, the old adages remain true: Be careful. Tread lightly. Look before you leap. For if history has taught us anything, it's that our time and energy are precious. And change for change's sake is rarely worth the effort.*

MISSISSIPPI POWER

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ple who have book knowledge about addiction," Alda explained. "I had a good counselor. She had been where I had been. We had walked in the same shoes. I really trusted her. She was hard on me. She made me face things in my life that I didn't want to face. When they surfaced, it was like a burden had been lifted.

"I had a praying grandmother. She still prays for me. My Mom gave her all. My sisters and brothers always showed me love. Regardless of where I had been, they showed me that I was still a part of the family.

"My Daddy would go to battle for me at anytime. My Mama would come and get me off the street. My Dad was just there. He knew that it was just tearing my Mom up, so whenever I called he would be right there. I called him all the time. They knew my heart."

The toll was hardest on Alda's two children, a seventeen year old son and a daughter in her early twenties now. "My kids remember things about my history. They were embarrassed. But during the past seven years, they have grown to hold their heads up high again. They see me as somewhat of a role model."

Alda said that she feels as if her life is complete again. She has been sober for seven years. Her children are doing well. And she enjoys healthy relationships with her parents and siblings. She says that her grandchild is her "heart."

Just over two years ago, she met a man whom she cares about a great deal. Alda said that he is a great inspiration in her life. He motivates her to do things that she would not do otherwise. Lately, she has considered going back to school, thanks to her fiance's encouragement.

"Considering what I have been through, I am very blessed to have someone who loves me and respects me like he does. When I met this man, we became friends and then we dated. Then we fell in love.

"It's not where you've been, it's where you are and where you want to go. With God and with love and a very loving companion, you can't go wrong. Because recovery is simple. It's so simple that people usually can't get it. In the morning, I wake up and ask God to keep me clean. At night I get down on my knees and thank him for another day, because all I have is today."

On occasion, Alda drives through the old neighborhood and stops to talk to some of her former acquaintances."When I see them walking, I pick them up and take them for a ride. They tell me that I look good. They ask me how I am doing. I tell them that only by the grace of God I am here today. This day I am blessed to wake up."

Alda sings with a gospel group, The Angels of Joy. The seven members sing at different churches along the coast and for special community events. They also meet regularly for bible study.

Alda's life appears to be back on track. "I feel like my family is complete," she explained. "I don't feel like I'm hidden in the shadows anymore. I am living up to my expectations. We are all on the same page. Like a great song, we're in harmony."

# Attorney Percy Watson 1998 Appreciation Party

## *Hattiesburg Convention Center*

Approximately 500 people joined State Representative Percy Watson for his 1998 Appreciation Party at Hattiesburg's Lake Terrace Convention Center. The photos confirm that once again everyone enjoyed the party and the community truly appreceiates this event.

# Essay Contest

## HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS & SENIORS

**THEME:**

*I Am One Piece of a Big Puzzle Called Life in this World*

**TWO PRIZES: $100 Savings Bond**

*Winning Essays will be published in March 1999 Issue of Mississippi Star.*

**CONTEST RULES:** Essays should be 250-300 words in length and must be typed (double spaced). All entries must be received by February 15,1999 at the following address:

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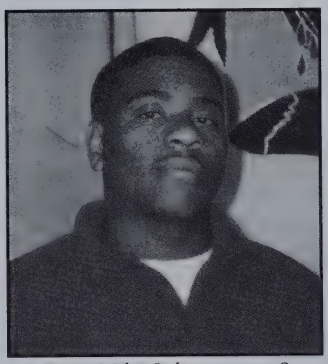
# Local Students Take an Active Role in the Chamber

Hancock County high school students have taken an active role in the community by serving as ex-officio members of the Hancock Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors. Students from St. Stanislaus College Prep, Our Lady Academy, Bay High, Coast Episcopal, and Hancock High are currently taking part in the Hancock Chamber program. One student from each school is selected by the faculty and administration of that school for a one year term as an ex-officio board member. Each student acts as an ambassador for his or her school informing the actual Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors of past and upcoming events.



*Junior Mylon Labat represents St. Stanislaus as an ex-officio member of the Hancock Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors for 1998-00.*

"We are extremely pleased to have Mylon Labat on our board," said Amy Gregory, Executive Director of the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce. "With high school students serving on our board, we receive valuable input from them, and in turn, they gain a wealth of experience from meeting with members of our community."

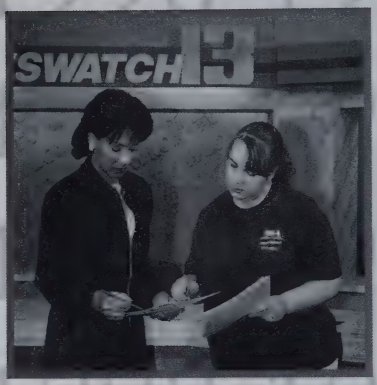
The high school juniors get a full term with the current Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and they get a year's worth of issues in the community. As a voice for the younger generation, the students get a chance to give input and gain awareness of what the community does from a different angle.

St. Stanislaus junior Mylon Labat, son of Mr. and Mrs. Myron Labat of Bay St. Louis, succeeds senior Kevin Estrade. Mylon is currently a member of the 1997-98 State Champion tennis team, the National Honor Society, the Key Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Stock Market team, and the Junior Knights of St. Peter Claver. Mylon is currently an altar server at St. Rose de Lima Catholic Church, a St. Stanislaus Student Council representative, treasurer of the National Honor Society, and a member of the Student Public Relations Advisory Board. Mylon has also been recognized as a Student of the Month and for achieving the Alpha Honor Roll.

"We are proud to have Mylon represent St. Stanislaus on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors," said Brother Ronald Talbot, SC, president of St. Stanislaus. "Mylon has been an active student leader for us. His student involvement at school allows him to bring an important perspective to the board, and the board interaction should enable him to hone his leadership qualities."

# Mississippi Star

# A Look Back at 1998




JANUARY

*WLOX-TV 13 news anchor Miyoka Broussard looks over scripts with producer Renee Johnson.*

FEBRUARY

*Mrs. Ellie Jewel Dahmer, widow of slained civil rights leader, Vernon Dahmer, recalls the painful events of January 10, 1966.*

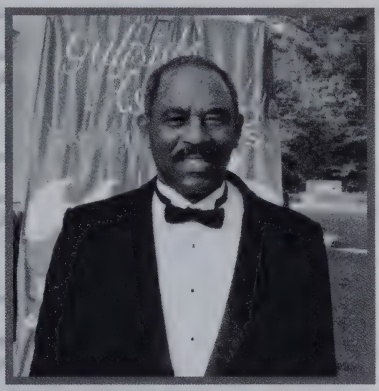
MARCH

*Arissa Madden named Mississippi's 1998 Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year.*

APRIL

*Eddie and Jo Vaughn pose between dives off Cozumel, Mexico*

**MAY**
*Ollie Oliver's hobby blossoms into Designer Touch Florist & Wedding Consultant.*



**JUNE**
*Willie Bradley leads One Thousand Men in Black Bow Ties Gala for Gulfside Methodist Assembly.*

**JULY**
*New Mississippians, Bill Johnson and Donna Holton are very active in the community.*

**AUGUST**
*Mississippi's Mother of the Year Mary L. Conway with husband Earl.*

MISSISSIPPI *Star*

# Mississippi Star

# A Look Back at 1998

SEPTEMBER

*Anniversary Issue dedicated to Maurice and Georgia Singleton, Sr. on their 50th wedding anniversary.*

OCTOBER

*Writers Calvin and Herta Smith recognized at 2nd Anniversary Banquet by Jeannie Deen of The Peoples Bank.*

NOVEMBER

*Candidate Robin Alfred Midcalf and daughter Ebony on campaign trail before being elected to County Court Judge in Harrison County.*

DECEMBER

*Shirelle Stewart and her mother Portia Stewart in cover photo for December issue. The daughter was the recipient of one of her mother's kidneys.*

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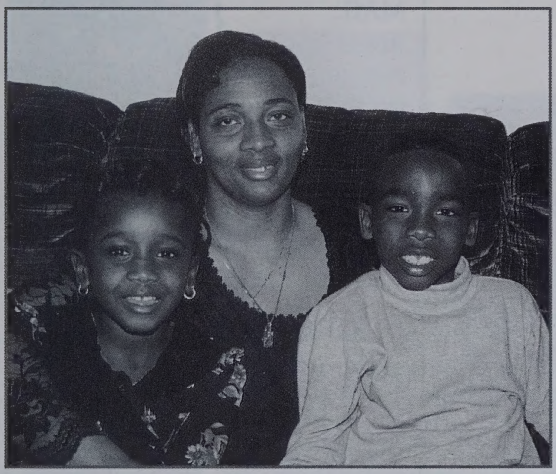
GUEST WORD

# How to be Strong and Positive about Your Life



*by Tania Marie Price*

Ask the Lord for a help because "He will" help if you pray to Him and ask for more strength. The Lord gives to you if you "try." You start a pattern and you will see the change. You will praise the Lord because "He will" help those who help themselves.

I say to the Lord every day, "Thank You Lord for waking me and my children this morning, and please continue to watch over James Edward and Jennia Marie. And please watch over all the children on the bus in order that they all get to school and back safely. I am determined and willing. When I go to church on Sundays, I say to the Lord, "Thank you for the blessings You give to us."

I thank God for awakening everybody, so that we can all pray to him together. Bless us all Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Thank you God for my family, my mother Betty Jane Price, my father Robert Manuel Price, my brother Nick Saucier, Jr., my sister Diane Lynn Saucier, my brother Steven Troy Saucier and my sister Sonja Dee Mary Price.

Lord, carry us and our brothers and sisters throughout the world because we all need your blessings. Hold on to us tighter in 1999 so that we can become prouder people.

*Lord we love Ya!*

# CALENDAR

## NAACP REGULARLY MONTHLY MEETINGS

### BAY ST. LOUIS BRANCH
2nd Tuesday
St. Rose de Lima Catholic Church

### GULFPORT BRANCH
1st Monday
Isiah Fredericks
Community Center

### BILOXI BRANCH
4th Thursday
Branch Office - Main Street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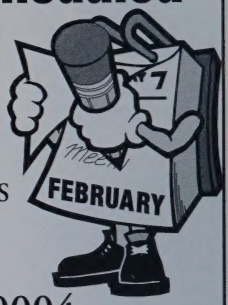


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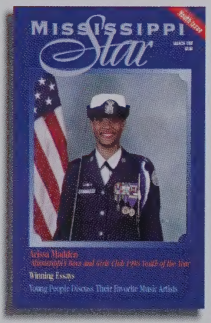
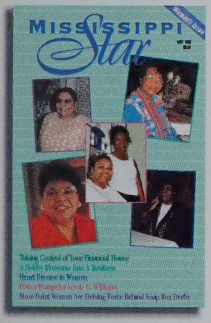
Saving, Investing & Protecting Your Money in 1998
A Look Back at 1997
Staying Healthy in 1998

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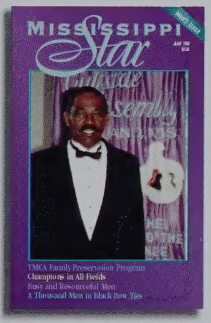
A Holiday Showcase Into A Tradition
Heart Disease in Women
Moss Point Student Ready for Yale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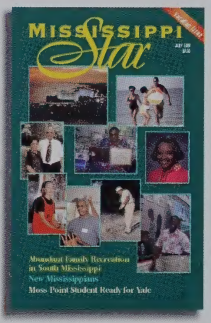
YMCA Family Preservation Program
Champions in All Fields
Rose and Rosebuds of Note
A Thousand Men in Black Bow Ties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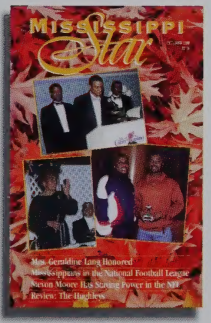
Abundant Family Recreation in South Mississippi
New Mississippians
Moss Point Student Ready for Yale

MISSISSIPPI Star
Michael Marks Leads Mississippi Association of Educators
Mary Gunnan is Mississippi's Mother of the Year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Mississippians in the National Football League
Barton Mosley Has Scoring Power in the NFL
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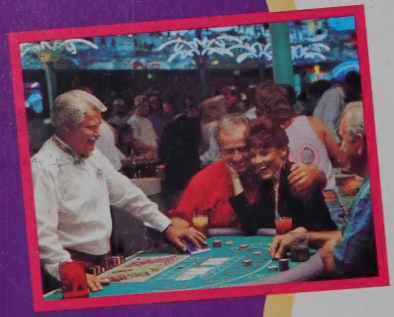

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